FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

VOLUME 34 / NUMBER 11 JUNE 1983

Since 1949 the purpose of Fellowship in Prayer is to promote the practice of prayer among all religious faiths whose fundamental belief is in God regardless of race, creed, or color, and whose tenets include the universal attributes of truth, honesty, justice, and mercy, that thereby there may arise a closer relation to Almighty God and a deeper spirit of fellowship among mankind.

Random Editorial Comments

READERS' responses to the questionnaire — on "Prayer and/or Meditation" — which appeared in this space in our February issue, reassures us that the people who are interested in Fellowship in Prayer continue to be the same sort they have been since the beginning. If there is any difference between readers fifteen years ago and now, it consists of a greater degree of openness to and curiosity about faiths other than those in which they were brought up. An unexpectedly large majority of the answers expressed interest in Sufi and Zen practices. There was comparatively little zeal about either Christian prayer or Christian meditation. These responses made us feel that we continue to be in touch with the right people (see Fellowship in Prayer's Purpose, printed above as usual).

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Readers also shared our enthusiasm for a directory of prayer and/or meditation groups in the U.S. We have long felt the need for such a directory. Those of you who are interested too can help by sending us a list of all such groups in your locality. Please include the type of group it is, where and when it meets, and the name and address and phone number of the individual or individuals in charge. We do not expect to compile such a directory overnight, but you can help us to make a start.

*

Readers familiar with this publication probably have noticed the quantity of material issuing from India. On the other hand, China, under the rule of Communists, offers very little. We asked a friend of ours who is going there as a tourist this summer to report on whatever religious activity is visible. Our friend agreed to send us a report even though she doubted there would be much of anything. Who knows? Only the other day we heard that the Chinese government is training young men as monks not to worship in the innumerable shrines and temples but to act as guides and maintenance men.

*

It is easy to point a finger at Communist irreligiousness and to become so enured to the insensitivity of our own society that we stop being aware of it. Recently another friend of ours took a trip to Mexico and visited the ruins of a great Mayan temple. "It's really impressive," a fellow American said to him. "Isn't it too bad they don't get someone from Disneyland in to do it right?"

*

It is fatally easy in our society to be content with the surface of things. Behind the great monuments of architecture, art, and literature which have been bequeathed to us by the past is a human struggle to make contact with higher powers which it behooves us to look into seriously and in depth. Readers' lack of interest in Christian meditation is a case in point. There is an enormous legacy of remarkable writings on the subject which, we realize, we ought to be investigating and putting to current use. — PG

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The School of Prayer

by JOHN B. NETTLESHIP

Discipline and training are valid and necessary . . . .

SOME years ago Bishop Trevor Huddleston conducted a School of Prayer at Oxford University. His words at the opening sessions were, I believe, of profound significance. "Notice," he said, "that there is a *school* of prayer. It is not ideas about prayer we want but the will to pray and the knowledge of how to set about it."

This is an emphasis made by Isaac Watts in his *Guide to Prayer*, which, after nearly two hundred and seventy years, still has very much to teach us. The book had its origin in a series of addresses to young people which he gave in his vestry in London. He was a great believer in the efficacy of systematic instruction, and he applied it to the practice of prayer as to other spheres of religion.

His argument was ". . . now, while institutions of logic and rhetoric abound, that teach us to reason aright, and to speak well among men, why should the rules of speaking to God remain so much untaught?"

I believe that his insistence is a valid one, though now, as no doubt then, there are those who argue that to talk about techniques of prayer is somehow near-blasphemy . . . that all that is needed is a baptism of the Holy Spirit . . . that if a man's heart is right with God, then his prayers, public or private, will be acceptable in God's sight. But I think arguments of these kinds can easily become pious evasions of the real issue — namely, that discipline and training are valid and necessary parts of religious experience as of any other human activity.

To argue that prayer is a "natural, spontaneous activity" is to forget that so are breathing, walking, and talking, yet there are people who breathe inadequately (to the impairment of their health), who walk with a slouch, and who talk badly. That an activity is "natural" does not mean that training and discipline are unnecessary.

As James Montgomery said,

Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
The Christian's native air

but this does not rule out the need to learn spiritually, as physically, to breathe properly.

Prayer is to be learned. When Jesus' disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray . . ." (Luke 11.1) Jesus did not suggest that they were asking something improper. He answered their request. He gave them a pattern

prayer: "Our Father . . . ."

He gave them other instructions, too, about prayer: "When you pray, go into a room by yourself, shut the door, and pray to your Father who is there in the secret place . . ." (Matt. 6.6), and again, "In your prayer do not go babbling on like the heathen who imagine that the more they say the more likely they are to be heard" (Matt. 6.7).

In achieving competence in most human activities, certain principles are involved. Important among them are: (a) acquiring a certain technical knowledge, (b) watching and studying the experts, (c) the discipline of constant, strenuous practice. May we not say, reverently, that these same principles apply to learning to pray?

Technical Knowledge

This is really the "how" and "when" and "where" and "what" of prayer. Isaac Watts deals, for example, with such subjects as posture, voice, and even gesture. Similarly, in one of his books, Stephen Winward reminds us that "the people of the Bible were not afraid to pray with their bodies. 'O come, let us worship and *bow down*, let us *kneel* before the Lord our Maker' (Ps. 95.6). Jesus looked up to heaven, or knelt upon the earth when He prayed (John 17.1; Luke 22.41). The primitive Christian prayed 'lifting holy hand' (I Tim. 2.8)."

Kneeling may be an effective symbolical expression of prayer — but so may standing. It depends to some extent on mood and on the content of our prayer.

Place, too, figures in the technique of prayer. Of course, "Where'er we seek Thee, Thou art found." In the Bible, by statement or by implication, we find people praying in an astonishing number of different places — Nehemiah in the court of a king and on a building site; Gideon in his farmyard; Daniel in a lion's den; Peter on the rooftop of a house; Paul in a prison cell and on board ship. There is very much to be said for special places — just as there is for special times.

There is value, I believe, in having a *particular* place for prayer. We are creatures of habit — and, remember, there are good habits as well as bad ones. To set apart a place, to hallow it by our prayer, fill it with memories of peace, and forgiveness and joy, can turn that place into a shrine, so that truly and increasingly we can say of it, "This is none other than the house of God, and this the very gate of heaven."

A *beautiful* place gives another dimension of prayer — in the country, in a garden, by a window that gives a glimpse of trees or of the sky. I don't think it is always necessary that our eyes should be closed when we pray. What about a vase of flowers, or a picture of some serene scene as the focus for our prayer, so that we may indeed worship in the "beauty of holiness"?

When possible, too, a *quiet* place helps, though indeed it is possible to pray amid the noise and bustle of the world. But remember what Richard Byrd, the Antarctic explorer, wrote: "It was on my lonely vigil during the long polar night that I learned the power of silence. Values and problems of life

sorted themselves out when I began to listen."

Of course, attitude counts more than place. I often say that effective prayer must be *persuaded prayer* and it must be *penitent prayer.* By this I mean that it must have about it the notes of confidence and expectancy. Jesus said, "Whatsoever things ye desire, when you pray, believe . . ." (Mark 11.24).

Secondly, penitence is a prerequisite of effective prayer. It is the pure in heart who see God. Clearly there is much more that ought to be said about the technique of prayer. We have not mentioned at all the matter of the content of prayer, for instance. Here, the simple formula A C T S may suffice — Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication. Each should have its place in our prayers.

Watching and Studying the Experts

If, as I have suggested, there is a technique of prayer, then books and articles and addresses about prayer must have their place in our learning. Yet, if asked advice about books, I think I would tend to suggest books *of* prayer rather than books *about* prayer.

We need to hear what the saints have said in temptation, in sorrow and fear, to capture something of the rapture of their praise, the poignancy of their confession, the strength of their faith. I know, of course, that prayer must be personal, expressing our own deep longings, sometimes in our own stumbling words. Yet to suggest that this is the only way of praying is to reject the great classic prayers of the Church. *They* indeed can be the channel of our devotion as may the prayer of, say, St. Basil or St. Ambrose, George Herbert, or John Donne, Charles Wesley or Isaac Watts, William Barclay or Reinhold Niebuhr.

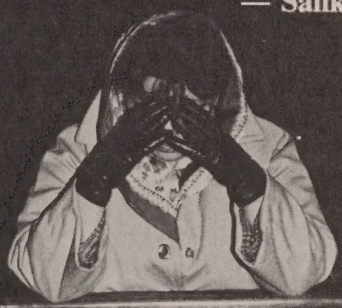
So, books such as *Great Souls at Prayer* and *A Chain of Prayer Across the Ages* may well be the constant companions of our quiet times. So, too, should the prayers of the Bible, especially those of Jesus. Not only will they sometimes make articulate our almost inexpressible feelings, but they will bind us more closely to all the saints of God on earth and all the company of heaven as well as "with gold chains about the feet of God."

The Discipline of Constant and Strenuous Practice

We learn to do things by doing them! When John Wesley, in spiritual despair, asked the Moravian Peter Bohler how he could preach and what he could preach about in his situation, he received the answer, "Preach faith till you have it, and then you will preach faith *because* you have it." It is not other with prayer. We learn to pray by praying. We are to pray "in season, out of season" — when we feel like it and when we don't. Olive Wyon, a profound spiritual mentor, counsels in her book *On the Way* that every time we have the *faintest* impulse to pray, we should offer prayer *there and then.* "The more we foster the desire for prayer," she says, "the more our appetite for it will grow." Prayer is disciplined, persistent, strenuous activity. Whether we think of "prayer as a battlefield" (to use H.E. Fosdick's phrase) or of Trevor Huddleston's "School of Prayer," these elements are indispensable. "Wrestle and fight and pray" are the keynotes of both disciplines.

Answer the Sufi Call
as best you are able
in this world, with a
loving heart and honestly.
Then you are truly safe
in this world and in
all other worlds.

— Salik Hamzavi



Coming Back to My Christian Heritage

AN INTERVIEW WITH PAT FENSKE

by D. JANI DRUCK

Elizabeth Fenske, who prefers to be called Pat, ushered me into her house in a quiet residential neighborhood in Philadelphia. The interior of the house is as eclectic and interesting as she is. Delicate oriental figurines balance out an enormous, complicated pipe organ which dominates one corner, much in the way that Pat's worldly accomplishments are matched by her intuition and spirituality. Balance is a word that comes up over and over again when one talks to or even thinks about Pat Fenske. When I first met her, she was at a symposium on holistic living put on by the Association for Research and Enlightenment to give a workshop on androgyny — the balance of masculine and feminine. Her work as a psychotherapist, a minister, and national president of Spiritual Frontiers Fellowship, has always been to help others achieve balance in their lives.

FIP: What does your day-to-day work consist of?

Pat: Professionally, I have a private practice in psychotherapy, where I try to help people bring together in their lives spirituality and psychology.

FIP: What led you to this work?

Pat: I guess I have always been involved in listening to people. Even in high school and college, I found myself involved in one-to-one relationships, listening and seeking to help people find direction. In college I majored in social science, with psychology being one of my major fields of study. I had a Danforth graduate fellowship for a year. I was 1,500 miles away from home — I was from Savannah, Georgia, and I went to Lincoln, Nebraska — working with student religious groups. After that year, which was a year of listening, I had a year where I worked with the Presbyterians in campus ministry. Then, I had seminary. One of the fields in seminary I was most interested in was the field of pastoral counseling. From seminary, I moved into campus ministry and teaching in Hong Kong for three years, and then to campus ministry here in Philadelphia at Drexel University. That terminated in 1969, and I've been in private practice since 1974.

I have continued to study psychology and parapsychology. I'm doing a dissertation now, for a Ph.D. in psychology, using some of what I call "arcane teachings" — teachings that go way back in history. I feel that therapists in this day and age do not have enough classical clinical therapeutic training or very many tools to use from the field of religion or spirituality.

I am also in my third year as national president of Spiritual Frontiers Fellowship, an organization I became interested in as a result of my studies in parapsychology. SFF was founded in 1956 by a group of religious leaders and writers who had a deep concern for the rising interest in the mystical and paranormal experience. It's Christian in its origin, but it's interfaith in its scope and outreach. The goal of SFF is the development of spiritual growth within the individual and the encouragement of new dimensions of spiritual experience within the church. The three major emphases of SFF are: prayer and meditation, spiritual healing, and expansion of consciousness. We also put a great emphasis on psychical research.

FIP: Does your work with SFF relate to your work as a psychotherapist?

Pat: My orientation as a psychotherapist is Jungian. Jung tried to help people see the relevance of religion in terms of psychology and psychology in terms of religion. In essence, I see the two as being one.

FIP: Psychology and religion?

Pat: Yes. The word psychology comes from the Greek word *psyche*, which means "mind" or "spirit." In a sense, spirituality then becomes the mind or the psyche or the soul. And psychology at its best should be a study of the psyche. I see religion as dealing with the conscious mind, the unconscious, and, in Jungian terms, the collective unconscious. So I see the personal unconscious, the collective unconscious, and the conscious as being one total spectrum that combines body, mind, and spirit. I prefer to see them all in holographic terms. You can take a small segment of something and if you

magnify that, you get a picture of the whole. We need to do that with different aspects of our lives, so that we see the whole.

FIP: Do your clients come to you looking for a sense of wholeness?

Pat: I find that people come to me as a psychotherapist not for the reason that they think they come, but to get meaning in their lives. I often have people who say to me, six months or a year down the pike, "You know, the reason I came to you is not really the reason I thought I came. I really wanted a deeper meaning. I wanted direction, things straightened out in my life, but under that I was looking for a deeper meaning to my life than I was finding on the surface."

FIP: So, it sounds like they often discover religious issues under the surface of psychological stress.

Pat: Yes — in a sense that's where prayer comes in. When people get in touch with the unconscious, there is a correlation with prayer. In a sense, prayer is communication with that which we are not thinking about all of the time. By that, I don't mean that we never think about a force in the universe greater than ourselves. But when, for instance, we're involved in a conversation, we're involved in carrying on that conversation, we're not involved in talking about *X* number of other things. I think we move to prayer without ceasing when we bring to consciousness the unconscious, and that is what therapy at its best is all about. The unconscious, like skeletons hidden in the closet, affects us while we're not even aware it's affecting us. When we bring it to consciousness, it can help us live our lives in harmony with that which is the wholeness of the universe. So, I think that working with the unconscious serves to bring about a spirit of prayer in a person's life.

FIP: Does meditation come into it?

Pat: I think that there is a distinction between prayer and meditation. In meditation I think we can do work with ourselves that is of a different nature than prayer. Now, maybe at best they should not be different — they should be one and the same thing.

For me, prayer is communion, or communication with the Creator. Meditation involves more listening. I think that the two go hand in hand, and I think that one can lead to the other. There is something about meditation that is more of a private thing, whereas prayer can be corporate or collective. Six or eight people can come together and pray for a collective reason or purpose, whereas you can come together and meditate, but each person does his or her own meditation in a much more silent way. Prayer has the feeling of being verbal. Meditation is non-verbal.

In a sense, meditation has a contemplative element in it, whereas prayer has something of a free-flowing spirit about it. For instance, I'm not meditating on what I'm saying right now, I'm speaking spontaneously with a

free-flowing kind of spirit. It's a fine line.

FIP: Do you incorporate a lot of what you've learned about parapsychology and mystical experiences in your practice as a psychotherapist?

Pat: I find that I don't have to do that. Therapy at its best brings in the paranormal, the mystical. The dynamics of the unconscious really have to do oftentimes with telepathic kinds of things that are going on. We pick up on things.

Dreams, for example, are a direct example of that which has to do with the dynamics psychologically of the unconscious. And telepathy. Precognitive dreams are as old as civilization.

FIP: I was interested in your idea of androgyny and how you wove it into psychology and religion.

Pat: Androgyny is one of the arcane teachings. There's balance, and there's polarity. We need to look at polarity as being complementary, rather than opposite. One thing should come from another. The way I explain that is Taoism, using the symbol of the Tao — the circle within the circle of the yin and the yang. There is some of the yin in the yang, and some of the yang in the yin. If you take anything to its extreme, it becomes the opposite. It's like in physics — if you send out something into space to the right, and something to the left, they will ultimately go around and curve and pass each other, because space curves. If you send something out in one direction, it curves around and comes back and meets itself.

A similar thing to what we're talking about here is the law of karma. I'm not necessarily talking about other lifetimes. I'm talking about right here and now. I think there is some real validity to the old Biblical warning that what we sow we reap. What we send out does come back to us. Thoughts are things, we do materialize things. Everything that happens is a thought before it is manifested. The way in which we live our lives does affect our future. Today does affect tomorrow, and there's no getting around it.

FIP: You blend Eastern and Western concepts together in a way that makes sense.

Pat: I think that religions are belief systems that have grown up in certain cultural situations. We have many, many different beliefs that have similarities but are expressed in different ways. All of the major religions speak to a certain number of questions. They speak to life, they speak to death, they speak to a form of conduct, or some kind of ethical living, they speak to our concept of the universe. And they speak to these things based on the language system of the culture they come out of. I think, though, that prayer is something that transcends all of those, it crosses the lines of all belief systems.

I have always felt, too, that there had to be what I call universal salvation.

Salvation literally means to be whole. For me, there has to be a universal system of wholeness. For me as a Westerner, the Judaic-Christian approach to wholeness makes sense, and it's not something that's done for us out there, so that we don't have to do anything. It's something that has already been done for every individual in the universe. It's up to us as individuals to respond by putting ourselves in harmony with the wholeness of the universe. *We* have to do something.

FIP: What about Jesus Christ?

Pat: It's really Jesus *the* Christ. He is one who has become whole, he's an example for us.

FIP: So, he's not the means, he's the *way* of our salvation — the way we need to follow to make ourselves whole?

Pat: Well, he himself said, "I and the Father are one." He has become interconnected with the Father. I think we have made the meaning of Jesus' teachings into something they really aren't. We quote so often, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but by me." We could just as well say, "Love is the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to love but by love," because what did Jesus represent? He represented love. He gave two great commands — love God and love your neighbor. He was not trying to do away with Judaism, he was trying to pull out those as being the two most important laws. That's all he was trying to change about Judaism. And we have shifted the whole thing around.

FIP: It seems that a number of people are coming back into the churches after having left them to go out exploring yoga, meditation, and Eastern spirituality. What do you think of that trend?

Pat: I think that we come back to that which we're most familiar with. I have studied Eastern religions, I have participated in a number of different forms and groups, and I see a unity and a oneness for us all. But, the familiar is our own cultural heritage. It's ingrained in us, it's a part of the personal unconscious. I think people returning to the churches are, in a sense, returning home.

Part of my personal unconscious is my Christian heritage. Part of the collective unconscious for me is the heritage of the rest of the universe. The more we understand what's in our personal unconscious, the closer we get to the collective unconscious. And the closer we get to the collective unconscious, the closer we get to functioning in a state of higher consciousness.

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(816) 254-8585.

FORMING A PRAYER GROUP: III

by REUBEN L. MUSEY

Our prayer group seminars were based on the words in I Peter 5: 7: "God cares about you." Each meeting opened with this prayer: "O Heavenly Father, though I feel alone in my prayer, cause me to know that I am alone only with Thee, and thus my solitude becomes our companionship."

When asked the question, "Is prayer answered?" one lady was evidently waiting to hear that God answers in His way the prayers of genuine people, people who are real and have integrity. A smile came over the face of a man when he heard that one's confidence in prayer includes the realization that God is not limited by time or space, that His will reaches into every corner, and that we are not dismayed by how our prayer is answered or by when.

A woman who had recently lost her husband said she felt her prayers had been answered because her husband, who had cancer, had suffered in agony for several years. She said one day they would be "together in God." She shared some lines from a poem she had written:

Bereft, you feel you've lost your all,
They've just answered heaven's call . . . .
So be content though grief you bear,
Each child of God is in His care.
While you are here and they above,
And are living in His love.

In periods of sharing it was concluded that God answers prayers through the church, through parents, through history. When we pray, we cannot expect our prayer to be answered on anything less than God's terms. God does not fail us. He simply does not act as we would. Prayer ought to result in new strength and wisdom for daily living. Prayer is when God has reached down to man in love, and man has reached up to God in faith.

Our prayer life must be related to the ordinary day-to-day routine. The life we live influences the way we talk with God, and the way we talk with God influences the life we live. We must never wait to be perfect before we pray.

To evaluate: these meetings presented an opportunity to reach many people. People were eager to gain more insights into the promises of God, knowing the Bible offers confidence for the future — confidence based not on human ingenuity or determination but on the love and mercy of God.

Reuben L. Musey, President Emeritus of Fellowship in Prayer, conducted prayer sessions in the tri-state area of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and W. Virginia.

Between Luther and More

A DIALOGUE by WALTER REINSDORF

Luther sits alone reading, his massive head bowed, his thin hand rubbing the ridge along his thick forehead. He wears his Augustan habit. He is smiling, and shaking his head. Behind him the door quietly opens. A strong, agile man, his eyes as intent as Luther's, enters. He is wearing a friar's habit. As Luther looks up towards him, his smile disappears.

Martin: Oh, it's you, Thomas. Still wearing that damned old sack cloth, I see *(he looks away).*
Thomas: *(His hand goes to the rope around his waist.)* What are you reading?
Mar: Something of yours.
Thos: I was afraid of that. Not the *Responsio ad Lutherum?*
Mar: The very same. I never read it carefully before. No time then.
Thos: Oh!
Mar: Such language for a saint.
Thos: It was the fashion, Martin.
Mar: Interesting. You're not as definite about the authority issue as I might have thought.
Thos: There are a few points worth going over, Martin, now that you bring it up. Please go ahead.
Mar: As you wish. *(He pauses for a moment.)* When I tried to remove that vast apparatus between man and God known as the Roman Catholic Church, man had to hew out his own state of grace, his own salvation based on conscience and scripture. I don't see what's wrong with that.
Thos: Nor do I. A sociologist would call it the difference between a natural and an artificial authority. Even a Roman Catholic must form his conscience. I know how you felt about Rome and the clergy. God knows I felt the same way. But the difference is that I think the "apparatus," as you call it, with its defects is necessary.
Mar: Why?
Thos: That apparatus shielded man.
Mar: From God.
Thos: Possibly. Shields can go both ways. But I mean it in the social sense. The Church is a social institution, corrupt, more or less, as all institutions are, but necessary as an intermediary in the world.
Mar: And capable of great harm.
Thos: And great good too. After all, the Church does bind and loose. It does determine the matter of good and evil. Alone, how can we be sure?
Mar: We are alone. God gives us the grace.

Thos: If I could be sure of that, but I can't be. It seems to me that Christian consensus is a surer guide than grace in this matter of good and evil. Because society harbors dangers affecting all innocents, society must react as a whole for better or worse. Sin is not just individual, it is social. The Church can define a social ill running through a whole society. An individual, or a congregation, cannot. You will recall how the Church once proscribed profit and interest as inimical to the ideals of a Christian society.
Mar: That's one message I endorsed, and you know it. The desire for gain is the root of evil. If the Church is honest, uncorrupted, can it do as you say? Can one Pope do so?
Thos: Yes, at least to the first. To the second — no. Does that shock you? Peter denied Christ after he was designated the "rock."
Mar: Well, there you are. So much for Popes. So much for Europe as one vast monastery — your Utopia. It could never have worked. The West could not be constrained within that ritualized dance of the Middle Ages. There's your answer. Were the Reformation and the Renaissance one big mistake? Should we have sat there until the end?
Thos: As for the end, we might be close to that now. Let us say that I would have preferred another scenario. Consider Galileo, Machiavelli, Freud. Man a rational animal. God dethroned. Atheism. Rationalism. You know how I felt about that. Yes, and Erasmus, too. Man following his nose. That's rationalism. Look what happened to the Greeks with all their rationality.
Mar: Open inquiry was necessary for the truth. Could we continue with a system founded on Ptolemy? Can't man create his destiny with his God? "Where the law touches us, we will affirm it." So said Rilke.
Thos: You Germans are moral adventurers. The Faustian "To strive is to err" is dangerous.
Mar: Saxon. To be precise, I'm a Saxon, Thomas. You stress the error rather than the striving. We have opened up whole new areas for moral challenge.
Thos: Which we could do without. I say "no" to your striving. Are we better off? We are not "touched" by the law; we are bound by the law.
Mar: I do not accept responsibility for what you say. The Roman Church would permit no test of the limits of the possible.
Thos: That's the point. We test those limits and fail. Nazism was one limit of the possible, as you put it, and there are others.
Mar: We have improved the lot of man on earth. Truly that is good.
Thos: What a cost. Rebellion. Disunity.
Mar: Rebellion or reformation? As for disunity, surely you know how I tried to keep the reformed churches together.
Thos: Rebellion against God and his laws. Many have stopped believing or caring.
Mar: You put it so starkly.
Thos: Rebellion becomes an end in itself. It is ongoing. Rebel to be free. Freedom always needs to define itself against something. Else, how can you know that you are free? First Pope, then king, then the natural father. You defined the Papacy by attacking it. I never said that much about it.

Mar: Of course, authority represses. Freedom is good. Difficult, but good. For each man to pursue happiness, freedom is a necessary condition.
Thos: Freedom always defines itself through protest. It needs a bogeyman. And, if there isn't one, invent one. Now it's the Communists. Always denial. Always the rebellious *non serviam.*
Mar: Freedom dignifies man.
Thos: Does it indeed? Take Marcus Brutus, for example. Did it dignify him? In the name of freedom, he killed Caesar, his best friend, because Caesar's ambition might foreclose Brutus' freedom. Isn't that selfish? He got Caesar before Caesar might have gotten him. Brutus needed freedom as a condition, to use your word, to lead his private life. Caesar might have taken that freedom, so Brutus kills.
Mar: You deny freedom. That's just it. You don't trust man.
Thos: If it comes to that — yes. I deny freedom. The road from Rome led to Nazism, and the Romantic glorification of man as superman. There's your freedom — Dachau. Do I have to trace that tragic sequence? Rebellion, rationalism, romanticism, and romantic super-heroes.
Mar: I know it's been done. I will surprise you, Thomas, and agree with you, without accepting responsibility, mind you. Individualism can lead to insecurity and fear, economic competition, maybe the death camps. I accept it as an arguable proposition.
Thos: Today, all over the world many are driven to despair in the name of economic freedom. If I had to give up my personal freedom to eliminate poverty, I would.
Mar: And with it democracy, and, dare I say, capitalism.
Thos: Dare? I was never overly fond of economic opportunism.
Mar: *(Shakes his head.)* More oppression. You'd be the first into prison.
Thos: Police forces, standing armies, intelligence agencies grew with democracy.
Mar: Your own monarch would not allow you the freedom to practice your belief.
Thos: And he was wrong for it. He is judged by a common moral standard.
Mar: As interpreted by the Pope.
Thos: I would prefer to say as interpreted by the Church as a whole, including the Pope. What else is there?
Mar: Are you baiting me? Why the individual forming his conscience with scripture alone before God.
Thos: That's the problem.
Mar: I see no problem.
Thos: In stressing personal sin, the individual ignores evil in society. Divorce and abortion tear at the sinews of society while the individual might conceive of them as good and necessary, especially to his freedom. The Church has a vision of society. Social systems have been liberated, not just from venal prelates and princes, but from God. Today great secular states compete economically, threaten each other with oblivion, and we discuss an old feud. Our new god is the state, Martin. Its princes are bureaucrats; its churchmen smile on the

facade.
Mar: I had hoped that a Christian could make his own leap to God. It seemed to be the only possibility. Reduce the sacraments. Strip the power of the sacerdotal priesthood. Can all that be undone?
Thos: As long as man is a social being, Divine justice must be built into the bricks and mortar of society. Man must again perceive the natural as an extension of the supernatural. Alone, insecure, and afraid, man makes a God of himself by seeking power to shore up his declining ego. Our example should be Christ who offered himself up to secular authority. The "things that are Caesar's" are our lusts for power, privilege.
Mar: How I wished to purge the Church of that same power-breeding corruption. They fought me. They declared themselves to be infallible. They declared me a heretic.
Thos: If they fought you, they also learned from you. I never said other than that the whole Church taken together had authority. To be precise, I once wrote that the Spirit, who leads to truth, "pours himself out through the whole chu.ch."
Mar: You wrote that?
Thos: I did, indeed. Where exactly I can't recall now.
Mar: And the apostolic succession?
Thos: The succession ties us visibly to Peter and to Christ. Sever that and you sever man from God.
Mar: The succession doesn't bother me. It's infallibility.
Thos: Contrary to received opinion, I never wrote that the Pope is infallible. I was made a martyr to Papal infallibility, and that is not so. I am much more at home in a conciliar church rooted in consensus, tradition, and the fathers.
Mar: And the Pope?
Thos: The Pope guarantees and signifies unity.
Mar: You are making up for your silence. Peter and Pope are far apart. And the Church cannot err because it is the Church?
Thos: That is so. Peter and Pope are far apart, but so are monarchial Pope and conciliar Pope. Change can occur.
Mar: And the separated brethren, as they are referred to, they are not schismatics dispossessed of the truth?
Thos: Not dispossessed, although more complete together than apart.
Mar: Things do change, it seems.
Thos: Consider further, Martin, that if the Papacy signifies unity in disunity, consensus can be expressed through the Papacy.
Mar: Not authoritative imposition.
Thos: Exactly.
Mar: And Papal authority, could it not conflict with communal authority?
Thos: In question of practice, yes. But better Papal authority rather than none to prevent schism. A man can defend the Church against the living intellect of other men, as Newman put it.
Mar: And doctrine?
Thos: Doctrine is what is already agreed upon. The Pope has the right, and should have the right, to interpret doctrine, or to turn doctrine into practice.

His teaching, or interpretation, might not always be out of consensus; however, teaching must be done.
Mar: And this teaching, if it is apart from the consensus, must we be bound by it?
Thos: We are bound to listen to it.
Mar: Then Peter teaching apart from consensus, if that is the situation, might teach subject to error. Isn't that so?
Thos: Again, that is so. A heretical Pope is possible, as I also once pointed out. Consensus is the ideal.
Mar: Or if in parts, as Christendom is now, which part?
Thos: If it must be — in all parts.
Mar: And that heretical Pope?
Thos: He would have to be removed.
Mar: You presume.
Thos: No more now than 450 years ago, before the discussion on the *magisterium* was interrupted.
Mar: Nevertheless, I am surprised, Thomas.
Thos: Yes.
Mar: I still can't accept an infallible Pope.
Thos: It comes down to that, doesn't it? Once more, Martin. Consider. If the Pope from his chair of Peter said that Mary was assumed bodily into heaven, would you accept it?
Mar: I would not want to have to accept it. Would you?
Thos: We didn't have to accept it in our time. In this century the Pope infallibly declared the Assumption to be so, one of the few times, in practice, that Papal infallibility has been invoked in the matter of "faith and morals."
Mar: Do you believe it, Thomas?
Thos: I try to. Perhaps faith is the pursuit, not the possession of truth.
Mar: You are blithe, if not almost Faustian.
Thos: And you are scrupulous.
Mar: I would have thought it to be the other way round.
Thos: Martin, you would drive yourself mad trying to believe in the Assumption.
Mar: And you would not? Is there a tinge of the heretical in that loyal heart?
Thos: I suspect that the scrupulosity of those who try too hard drives them to despair. Look how the Italians compromise happily, and we with our fury.
Mar: I can't bear to look. That visit to Rome . . . .
Thos: I should never have brought it up. Martin, can you accept a Church which believes it was commissioned by Christ, contains a deposit of faith, and an ordained ministry?
Mar: If pressed. The ordained ministry bothers me.
Thos: Good. Let's leave it at that, at least for the moment.
Mar: Yet.
Thos: Yet, what, Martin?
Mar: Yet, when it came down to it, we were both left alone with our consciences before God and our inquisitors. Where were bishops and community

then? I had none. You had none. When it came to it, you disagreed with your bishop, your community, your consensus, as I did. Your own wife didn't understand you.

Thos: I had one bishop, Martin, the Bishop of Rome, if not of London or Canterbury, and one other, John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, together with some few remaining Roman Catholics in England. You devastate me, Martin. Your community sprang up around you. You created it — to your credit.

Mar: Not as much as I would have liked, and I ignored it anyway. Think also of the limitations of Christ's own community: how many rejected him, how few accepted him.

Thos: I can't disagree. A community present and in agreement would have helped. I concede conscience, if you concede a Papacy commissioned to teach.

Mar: I will entertain it. One more thing. Forgive me, I must pursue this: Do you insist that the Reformation and our subsequent history were somehow all one big mistake? In your heart of hearts, would you have stopped history somewhere around the 12th century?

Thos: Perhaps somewhere around 1516. I'm sorry I couldn't resist. It is a very hypothetical question, Martin.

Mar: Would you insist that the Reformation led to Nazism, atheism, even capitalism?

Thos: I prefer to believe that perhaps we have learned by now that we need one another.

Mar: We have two fundamentally opposing views of man's nature, and human destiny. I continue to see man as a co-creator with God, striving for the Good, sharing causality with God. I presume to remind you that, as St Thomas pointed out, God communicates a likeness of his causality to man. By choosing also to create, man participates in God's causality, sharing with God the possibilities of the universe, including good and evil.

Thos: Visionary, but perhaps dangerous. It has that Romantic ring to it.

Mar: We dare, we try, we lose our way, we fear the wrath of God. I rescued Christendom when all the old institutions and beliefs might have been completely swept away along with Ptolemy and Aristotle. By finding a way for man to go alone, I might have saved your museum.

Thos: You and Pope John XXIII.

Mar: Will you not relent?

Thos: Relent? If you're suggesting I prefer authority and control, I don't disagree.

Mar: Then if I get Dachau, you get the Inquisition.

Thos: So be it. The Church is Catholic, universal. There must be room for all of us. And the bomb. Don't forget the bomb. We must fight that one together, else we perish together, our last and only ecumenical movement.

Mar: And then Satan triumps — finally.

Thos: So we go from here instructed.

Mar: There is no other choice.

(They embrace)

PURIM

Photo Essay by TOM DUNHAM

PURIM is perhaps the least solemn holiday in the Jewish new year. The story of Purim is told in the book of Esther, and recounts the heroism of Esther over the murderous machinations of Haman. In a larger sense, the holiday is an affirmation that the rule of tyrants can be defeated — that good shall always triumph. In Jewish communities around the world Purim is a day of great celebration — of family gathering, gift giving, shared meals, and children in costumes.

Children in costume are a reminder of the amateur players *(shpielers)* and add to the gaiety of the holiday

Coming together . . .

Sharing the Purim meal

Gathering at the synagogue

The "Saint Francis" of Tibet

MILAREPA

by WILLIAM M. STEPHENS

All worldly pursuits have one inevitable end, which is sorrow: acquisitions end in dispersion; buildings, in destruction; meetings, in separations; births, in deaths. Knowing this, one should renounce acquisition and heaping up, and building, and meeting; and, faithful to the commands of a Master, set about to realize the Truth.

— Milarepa

CENTURIES AGO, in the high Himalayas, a hunter and his hound chased a stag into a cave. As the hunter, with bow and arrow ready, crept inside, he was astonished to see the hound and the stag lying peacefully at the feet of the hermit, who was singing to the animals. The hermit, clad in a loincloth, was barely skin and bones, but his face radiated peace and goodwill. He sang about a stag and a hound and a hunter, and the evils of killing. "Conquer yourself,

not others," he sang. "Detachment in this life will lead to bliss in the next."

The words struck deep in the hunter's heart. He renounced the world and became a disciple of the hermit, who was Milarepa, the great Tibetan yogi.

Stories of Milarepa's love for animals are reminiscent of tales of Saint Francis of Assisi, who a century later preached to the birds and reasoned with a wolf. (Among the 100,000 preserved songs of Milarepa are hymns to pigeons and tigers.) Both Francis and Milarepa endured extreme hardships and exhibited great devotion and perseverance in their search for God. Milarepa's path was perhaps even steeper than Francis'. Before he found a master who led him to sainthood, Milarepa was involved in black magic and even murder.

He was born in 1052 in the village of Tsa, near the Tibet-Nepal border, fifty miles north of Katmandu. His given name was Tho-pa-ga ("Sweet-voiced") but we will use his better-known name, Milarepa. His father, Mila-Sherab, came from a long line of traders, and his mother, White Garland, also came from a prosperous family. They owned a farm, livestock, and a three-story house. Milarepa was the only son, and he had a younger sister Peta.

When Milarepa was seven, his father became terminally ill. The relatives gathered, and Mila-Sherab gave all his property to his brother in trust for the widow and children. "When my son comes of age," Mila-Sherab said, "he should be given charge of everything, and he should then marry Zesay (a maternal cousin) in accordance with the wishes of both families. Until then, my brother and his wife should look after my family." A will was written and signed, and Mila-Sherab died.

The aunt and uncle wasted no time in taking over the property — they even removed the furnishings and jewelry from Mila-Sherab's house. White Garland and her children were forced to labor in the barley fields in summer and to spin wool in winter. They were given scraps to eat and rags to wear. The children's long black hair, once braided and pinned with gold and turquoise, was now unkempt and lice-infested. The whole village talked about their inhuman treatment.

When Milarepa was fifteen, his mother made plans to regain the estate. Selling the barley from a field she had owned before marriage, she used the proceeds to buy clothes and furniture and to prepare a feast for all relatives. After the guests had drunk the *chhang* (barley beer) and eaten the curried mutton, rice, and chutney, she read aloud her husband's will and thanked the aunt and uncle for their help. "But now Milarepa is old enough to manage the property and to marry Zesay," she said. "So we respectfully request that all property be turned over to him as set out in the will."

The aunt and uncle coldly denied that the property had ever belonged to Mila-Sherab. "He borrowed everything from us," the uncle said. "Even the house you are living in was built with my money."

"That is untrue," said White Garland, flushing. "You are trying to steal my son's inheritance!"

The aunt's lip curled in disdain. "You ungrateful wretch!" she said. "You get no more help from us." She and her husband stalked out, followed by their three husky sons and the relatives who took their side. At the door, the

uncle turned and sneered. "If you are strong enough, fight us," he said. "If you are not, cast spells on us."

White Garland determined to act on her brother-in-law's parting taunt. She sold her land and used the money to send Milarepa away to study with a guru of the black arts. A year later, Milarepa returned to take revenge on his thieving kin.

THE OLDEST SON of the aunt and uncle was about to be married, and a celebration was in progress. Their house, like many Tibetan dwellings, was raised on pilings, with the ground level used to stable horses. Milarepa chanted a special incantation, calling up a horde of evil astral entities. A servant who went to fetch water saw monstrous snakes and toads digging at the base of the house. Clawing at the main support was a scorpion the size of a yak. The servant shrieked in horror, and the horses tied to the pilings stampeded, shaking the foundation so hard that the house collapsed, killing thirty-five people, all of whom had condoned the treatment of White Garland and her children. The aunt and uncle escaped, however, being spared to endure more punishment.

Unable to contain her cruel joy over Milarepa's success at sorcery, White Garland crowed and boasted openly of her son's occult power. Shocked by her vindictiveness, many villagers who had sympathized with her now turned against her. Her brother-in-law, mad with grief and rage, came to strangle her, but was stopped by a neighbor who suggested it would be best to kill the son first and then the mother, to prevent retaliation. Sentiment grew so strong that a band of armed men was formed to search the surrounding hills for Milarepa.

White Garland sent an urgent message to her son at his hideout, begging him to use sorcery to destroy the villagers' crops. "If you don't," she said, "your mother and sister will be massacred." So Milarepa called down a hailstorm, which crushed all the barley crop just when it was ready for harvest. Then, after narrowly escaping a group of villagers who wanted to chop him to pieces, he went into exile. The villagers, fearful of further acts of sorcery, persuaded the uncle to return Mila-Sherab's land to White Garland.

Milarepa, in hiding, was tortured by remorse for his black deeds. He longed so fervently for God, and for forgiveness, that he could not eat or sleep. Hearing mention of an eminent lama called Marpa the Translator, he felt inexpressible joy and a deep conviction that Marpa was his destined guru. He set out immediately for Marpa's cloister at Wheat Valley.

Marpa, the Perfect Master, knew that Milarepa was coming but gave no hint he recognized the man who would become his most honored disciple. In fact, his behaviour toward the young aspirant was very different from what most of us would expect of a spiritual teacher. When Milarepa arrived, he found a pot-bellied man plowing a field. This was Marpa, who greeted the youth by giving him a pitcher of beer and asking him to finish the plowing for him.

Later, when Milarepa confessed his sins of sorcery and requested initiation, Marpa asked him to prove his skill by directing hailstones onto a gang of robbers. Although consumed by shame at the thought of committing additional violence, Milarepa complied. Returning, he begged acceptance as a

disciple.

"What?" roared Marpa. "You expect to receive the sacred *dharma* which I brought from India at great expense and trouble . . . all for a few paltry hailstones? All you have demonstrated, great sorcerer, is that you can do evil. Can you do good? Go now and restore life to those you have killed, and then I will accept you. If you cannot, don't bother me again."

Milarepa was plunged into despair, but next day the master was in a milder mood. "Just be patient," he said, "and you will have the teachings. But first, since you are young and strong, I'd like you to build a house for me." Taking Milarepa to the top of a hill, he gave him detailed instructions for building a circular house. "You must build the entire structure without help," he said, "and haul the rock to the site on your back."

After months of backbreaking labor, and when the house was half-finished, Marpa came up to inspect and told Milarepa that the choice of site was a mistake. "Tear it down, please," he said, "and take the stones back to where you got them."

After that was done, Milarepa was told to build a crescent-shaped house on a different hill. It, too, was abandoned and disassembled before completion; and the same was true of a third, triangular house. Next came a nine-story rectangular building, and then a ten-story annex. In every case Milarepa was stopped before the job was done. For many years the carrot of initiation was dangled before him, always just out of reach. His back was constantly raw from hauling stones. Time after time, on one pretext or another, he was scolded, abased, demeaned, and even thrashed. To add to his humiliation, other aspirants who arrived were treated courteously and given immediate initiation. Often Milarepa was on the verge of suicide. Several times he tried to run away, aided by Marpa's compassionate wife, who was outraged by her husband's uncharacteristic behaviour.

Finally, of course, when Milarepa's heart had been purified by pain and despair, and his pride reduced to humility, he was accepted. The master lovingly cut his disciple's hair and fed him by hand. Thereafter Milarepa studied and meditated for a year under Marpa's personal guidance. During this period, songs began to flow spontaneously from Milarepa's lips — a phenomenon that continued throughout his life.

One night Milarepa dreamed of his mother and woke yearning to go home. "You may go if you wish," Marpa said, "but you are destined never to return to Wheat Valley." Tears filled the master's eyes. "You and I, my son, will never meet again in this life. You will become a shining light for Buddhism, but you must always remember that your karma demands total renunciation."

Milarepa returned to Tsa to find the family home in ruins. Inside were the bones of his mother, who had died eight years earlier. He called on a friend who told him that his sister Peta had wandered away, destitute. Saddened, Milarepa retired to a cave on a bluff above his house, where he continued his yoga and ate sparingly of the food provided by his friend. Finally, weak from hunger, he went to beg from herdsmen camped in the valley.

Approaching a yak-hair tent, he was set upon by dogs released by an irate woman he recognized as his aunt and who flailed him with a tent-pole. Exhausted and hurt, he fell to the ground and sang a song of supplication which moved his aunt to tears. She gave him food and comfort, but his uncle, on seeing him, chased him away with stones and arrows.

Soon after, Milarepa was visited in his cave by Zesay, to whom he had been betrothed as a child. She had never married and had lived in the hope that he would return to farm his land and live in his house. He told her it was impossible — that he must continue his austerities in order to attain liberation in his lifetime. He offered her the use of his house and land on condition she would give it to his sister Peta if Peta ever showed up, but she rejected the gift.

After Zesay left, Milarepa vowed to find a remote cave and remain in solitude until he became enlightened, never again asking help of anyone. But before he left, his aunt appeared with sacks of provisions. "You must leave, nephew," she said. "My neighbors fear you will harm us with your black magic. Take these goods in payment for your barley field, which you have no use for."

Milarepa accepted the offer and sang a sad song of farewell. Moving to a secluded cave miles from habitation, he rationed his food so carefully that it lasted three years. During that time he experienced ecstatic visions and learned to generate the vital warmth that permits a yogi to sit naked in snow and ice without discomfort. After his flour was gone, he survived for years on nettle soup, which turned his skin green. He was virtually a skeleton when Zesay and his sister Peta, recently returned to the area, found his cave and begged him to come home. He sang them a song of the joys of his way of life, and they tearfully departed, leaving him food and cloth.

After eating wholesome food for the first time in years, Milarepa went through a profound change in consciousness. His chakras — psychic centers — opened fully, and he was possessed of full control of energy and mind. He now had the power to change his form at will, to transport himself instantly to any place on earth, and to fly bodily in the air. Most important of all, he enjoyed perpetually the blissful state of desirelessness.

NOW an illumined adept, Milarepa's very existence was a boon to mankind. People flocked to him. Over succeeding decades he acquired thousands of followers, including his sister and his aunt, gave hundreds of sermons and discourses, and wrote a spirited autobiography to which all who write about him are indebted.

At the age of eighty-four, Milarepa gave his final discourse (on the law of karma) and distributed his worldly possessions (a cotton loincloth and shirt, a skull cap, flint and steel, a wooden bowl, a bone spoon, and a bamboo staff) to his closest disciples. As he prepared for *mahasamadhi* — the voluntary leaving of the body — rainbows filled the sky, a heavenly fragrance pervaded the air, and hosts of angels sang celestial hymns for all who came to pay homage to Tibet's great yogi.

Litany

A Story by SALMON RYDER

"TWO CITIES in France describe his pants," my grandmother intones ritualistically for my benefit from her spot next to the radio in the "Chesterfield" armchair where she sits in our living room in Swampscott, Massachusetts, in 1941: "Too long and too loose."

The New England catarrh in her voice overlays a native Irish accent, as Gram continues her traditional litany of funny saws and sayings. She glosses Wordsworth this way: "Of all sad words of tongue or pen/The saddest are these: 'You're in again.'"

I am in again and it must be winter, for we are gathered by the old Philco that will someday soon tell us about Pearl Harbor to listen to her favorite noontime radio shows, and I must be dripping puddles — not that she can see them — on the "old" living room rug, an Axminster with stylized "oriental" design in faded blues and reds soon to be replaced by a broadloom of more "modern" if less distinguished overall-brown pattern. I've just come in from carving out yet one more snow house in the huge pile of snow thrown up beside the driveway outside the house on Barnstable Street. I am snowy with melting snow, and my clothes hang from me with the weight of icy moisture in them. Dark gray wool stockings droop around my feet, and stiff-ribbed brown corduroy knickers scrape at my bare blue ankles. Only my favorite green and white reindeer sweater is relatively dry.

There is no school today and there probably won't be any tomorrow. My mother and father have nevertheless gone to work — even with two feet of snow — and I have Gram all to myself, if I don't count Maggie, my red setter.

(My brother William is off with his pals shoveling driveways around town for two, four, and six 'bits,' before going off to the war, and my sister Catherine is still outside tobogganning on the hill.) During the commercials, I will go into the kitchen and fix Gram and me a lunch of Campbell's tomato soup, thinned with milk, and grilled American cheese sandwiches. We are going to listen first to Boak Carter with the news at 12:00, followed by "Helen Trent" at 12:30, when we will eat our soup and sandwiches.

"If you didn't go to school," my grandmother murmurs comfortably as I tune in WEEI, "you met the scholars coming home."

Then in accents sweet with the righteous piety of the professionally well-informed, a voice as different from my grandmother's as mine is from Barbara Walters' emerges from the cloth-covered panels of the gothic-arched radio beside her chair. "Good afternoon," it says. "This is Boak Carter with today's news."

During the next three quarters of an hour, between dashes to the kitchen, I will stare at the radio (as we did in those pre-television days) or stare at Gram from my perch on the upholstered stool at her feet, calmly noting the wiry hairs that sprout from her prominent, square chin. She herself gazes sightlessly, fingering her odd, one-decade-only chaplets of prayer beads. The radio programs merge in a litany in my mind, so that the story that asks the question, "Can a girl from a little mining town in Colorado find happiness as the wife of a wealthy and titled Englishman (Lord Henry Brinthrop)?" gets mixed up for me with the fortunes of Helen Trent, who, like my mother, the youngest daughter of this old woman here in the living room with me, is a lawyer, a 'lady mouthpiece,' a working woman, a heroine. Boak Carter's high-pitched breezy accent sets the stage. "Gram," I have said, "tell me about your brother Bob and the house in Charlestown in the early days, and the fiddle and his dancing."

"After the snow," she says in her Irish/New England voice. "After the snow."

She is eighty-three and blind. She came to this country at seventeen from Waterford around the time of the American Civil War, and lived near Boston with two elderly aunts, finding domestic work right away in Brookline and Boston with one family and another who prized the kind of domestic service such a young woman had to offer, knowing in their Yankee way a good thing when they saw it, and who were prepared to give steady employment to these Irish girls in exchange for small, one might even say, pitifully small sums. From such small sums, nevertheless, the young woman saved enough to bring her mother and three brothers over from Ireland. Presently she had married a young man from Cork and settled in Charlestown on the hill that is crowned by the Bunker Hill monument. The men found work in the vast Charlestown railroad yards serving Boston just across the Mystic River. My grandmother's brother Bob worked there with the others, despite the hump on his back that he had from a childhood accident in the old country. It is this brother Bob who played fiddle, danced, sang, and was no stranger, either, I divine, to the whiskey jar, who never married and so had no children "to speak of," as they

used to say, and for whom I am named non-pseudonymously.

"Oh, we had the time," Gram used to reminisce. "Grand times. Stories from home, music and dancing. Bob knew all the tunes — old and new — and everybody came, the cousins from Jamaica Plains, cousins from Brighton, and Bob would sing 'Sweet Vale of Avoca' and 'Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms.' Grand, grand times."

My grandmother's speech was rapid and clipped, and I supposed a little erroneously that these were the accents of Dublin, "where the purest English in all this world is spoken." It is true that even when she murmured, everything could be understood with a quiet clarity that almost seemed to suggest a process of thought-transference rather than speech. Among the rest of us — my brother and I with our unenthusiastic New England r's and listless, elongated vowel sounds, and even our parents with their more forceful, cultivated speech — the voice of my grandmother darted in and out with graceful, deft authority, a litany that outclasses us at every turn with effortless precision.

But "Helen Trent" has given way by now to "Second Husband," which does not interest my grandmother; and I no longer want to hear about Charlestown and the old days; so I go back outside to my snow house, and Gram resumes her prayers.

WHEN I knew her (the only grandparent who had not died before my birth), she spent most of her time praying on those chaplets of beads. From morning to night, she interrupted her whispered Our Father's, Hail Mary's, and Glory Be's only at mealtimes and for her midday radio programs, or to make an occasional comment or to let fall one of her funny sayings. ("Hi, neighbor," she would sometimes greet one of us, borrowing the phrase from the radio ads of the time for Narragansett Ale: "Have a Gansett.") Later on, I came to identify her chaplets romantically as runic beads, and the prayers she counted on them, I fancied, were old Irish litanies and pious ejaculations honoring saints like Broghan, Brendan, and Colum-cille. The truth is, however, that this was the willed invention of a third-generation American (me) who wanted as a young man to be more Irish than the Irish. It is unlikely she prayed in any other medium than English, just like me.

She died at the age of eighty-eight in 1945. She was "laid out": in the habit of the Third Order of St Francis in the living room of my uncle's house in Newton, and then buried in the cemetery beside her husband, my mother's father, the man from Cork, and her brother Bob and the others, two of them children she had lost soon after birth, and the cousins, and where a few short years later, my uncle himself would go to an early grave, the first of her four surviving children to "go."

Saint Colum-cille, Saint Brendan (discoverer of America?) Saints Broghan and Patrick, oh great and glorious Saint Patrick, listen to the prayers of thy children, and my great Uncle Bob, Boak Carter, and Helen Trent, Our Gal Sunday, and you, especially, Gram. May your soul and all the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

WASSILY KANDINSKY

Visions of a New Spiritual Realm

by JOHN S.D. GLAUS

Form, in the narrow sense, is the boundary between one surface and another: that is its external meaning. But it has also an internal significance, of varying intensity; and properly speaking form is the external expression of inner meaning.

THE representation of reality has been a predominant theme of art since man first applied himself to the visual arts. Few artists prior to the 20th century had, however, conceived of the notion that a painting could come into existence of its own volition, be aesthetically buoyant, predicated upon shapes and colors and the emotional content of the artist, and more importantly autonomous of reality. Prior to non-objective art, the barometer of success was based upon the artist's ability to skillfully manipulate shapes and colors into a facsimile of reality. The more closely he achieved that purpose, the greater the accolades. The farther he distanced himself, the more caustic the opprobrium.

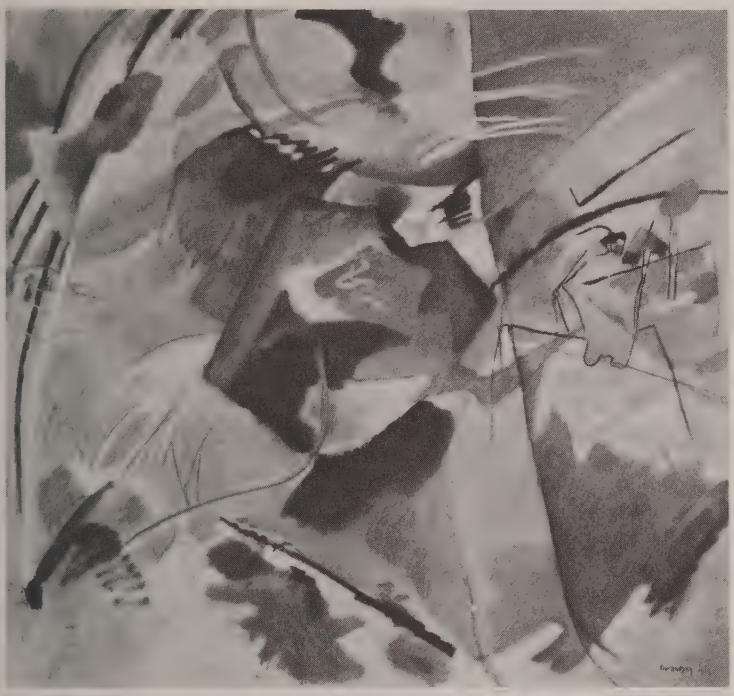
Every work of art is the child of its time; often it is the mother of our emotions. It follows that each period of culture produces an art of its own, which cannot be repeated. Efforts to revive the art principles of the past at best produce works of art that resemble a stillborn child. — Kandinsky.

It would at best be academic and certainly redundant to ascertain the obvious importance of the Impressionists, the way they were and why they painted in the fashion they did, but to state the obvious is essential: they were the masters of colors and its applications, and as they comprehended light, they could manipulate shapes. The Impressionists were possessed of an obsessional and perservering impetus, in an aesthetic form, compelled to fulfill a destiny, to fill the cup of fate and their work is an object-lesson. We should not argue about these poets of the palette.

How many books did Renoir write on how to paint? — Kandinsky.

One step beyond the myriad reflections and sparkling colors of the Impres-

IMPROVISATION WITH GREEN CENTER



COURTESY OF THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

sionists, the way most naturally led to the liberation of extraneous content, nature was to be gradually symbolized by visual metaphor, and the formal prerequisites — the constituents of the canvas known as shapes, recognizable shapes were to be eventually expunged. The Impressionists provided their successors, the non-objective artists, with all but the ultimate piece of the puzzle. The principle of "inner necessity" and the link to symbolic language was the missing piece, and Wassily Kandinsky was the catalyst.

Wassily Kandinsky was born in Moscow in 1866 to upper-middle class

parents, whose original designs for their son had been economics and the law. But Kandinsky's personal predilections from his earliest years had been for art and music. After a brief yet brilliant beginning in teaching law, he left his native Russia at the age of thirty and went to Munich. The move to Munich was more than a simple geographic change. The Russian intelligentsia believed that the Bavarian capital was the intellectual gateway to the West. New stirrings were erupting over the European continent, and Munich appeared to be the focal point. The times were characterized by a great vacuum of discontent. The revolutionary aspects of pre-War Europe were indications of the attemps to placate the internal writhings of the malcontents and anarchists against the externals of a rapidly dysfunctional social structure which malignantly spread itself across The Continent. Rapid industrialization during the 19th century had provoked a loss of idealism, and secular society was viewed as being incapable of satisfying the most basic ethical and moral needs of the day. This pervasive disbelief in the inherent goodness of man and society engendered a necessity within Kandinsky's being to reform art and employ it as a major weapon in the creation of a new utopian realm.

When religion, science and morality are shaken and when the outer supports threaten to fall, man withdraws his gaze from externals and turns inwards. Literature, music and art are the most sensitive spheres in which this spiritual revolution makes itself felt. — Kandinsky.

This statement is undoubtedly an indication of Kandinsky's forceful messianic vision which predominated his thinking and the development of his nonobjective art. It is in the field of his religious and philosophical beliefs that we must cast our glance to understand that Kandinsky found painting to be a powerful instrument for social change, and that art had a specific purpose: "to serve the development and refinement of the human soul." But this belief was not the simple development of an idea, it was composed by the infiltration of a multitude of highly varied elements. The predominant theme for the intellectuals was the revival of interest in mysticism and the occult. Inspired by Blavatsky's "Isis Unveiled" intellectuals sought out and investigated new forms of esoteric thinking in their attempts to communicate the cosmic, and become initiated to the paths of enlightenment. The Theosophists' secret doctrines on the unification of all religions, the Symbolists heralded along with Moreas' manifesto, coupled with his own indelible mark of Russian orthodoxy, enabled Kandinsky to embark on his messianic vision that the artist's role would be primordial in the "coming spiritual religion." Kandinsky's brilliant mind was to act as the catalyst, the grammarian of symbolic language, the animator of visual metaphor who felt more at home with color than with drawing. His belief that one had to see life in all things which would increase one's sensitivity and help to restore the correct balance of the spiritual to the world.

To say that Kandinsky was the first abstractionist would be erroneous, to say that his work was spiritually intoned is true, and for this reason alone, if for no other, we shall have to go on reckoning with him as a large phenomenon if not as a large artist.

BOOKS

THIS writer — who is a Christian — finds himself constantly plagued by Albert Camus — who was decidedly agnostic. The problem comes from reading and rereading Camus' *The Plague,* surely one of the greatest allegorical tales ever told. Putting it perhaps much too simply: Christians do good either because they expect a reward (salvation) or, barring that, because they fear punishment (damnation). And this is not limited to Christians. Certainly those Eastern religions which deal with the idea of "Karma" are encouraging their adherents to do good because it will move them closer to nirvana or extinction, "the next time around." In *The Plague*, however, Camus seems to suggest that one ought to do good simply because, as a finite human, that is what one *ought* to do. There is no hope for ultimate reward here just as there is no fear of eternal punishment. There is simply the chaos and meaninglessness of existence out of which man is called to create some sense of decency and justice — curiously knowing all the while that — in the end — he will be unable to do this. It seems, in short, that Camus is challenging us to do good, to create meaning in the face of nihilism.

It might be well to briefly refresh the reader's mind about the setting and content of *The Plague*. The book was written and published shortly after the end of the Second World War. Camus, who had worked in the French resistance and who had heard many first-hand accounts of the Holocaust, had lost whatever faith he had once had in the power of human institutions to produce and maintain a just society. The distinction between good guys and bad guys was blurred; in this war (as, in retrospect, perhaps in all wars), even those who claimed to be on the side of the angels appeared to be barbarians. Given the sanctity of human life, there seemed to be no way to save someone without also destroying someone else. Out of this mind set came *The Plague.*

The story takes place in the Algerian port of Oran. Oran is painted as a rather dull, bourgeois town in which people may sometimes make a show of concern for others, but wherein the real concern is with the petty details of one's own existence. Into this town comes the bubonic plague . . . and things start to change. As the plague works its way through the town, those external trappings which people use for status or to make themselves feel better than others begin to fall away. The people of Oran try to go about their daily business as if nothing is happening but as their loved ones are carried away to the hospital — never to return — the pretense of "business as usual" becomes more and more difficult. It gradually becomes clear that while all may not be taken away by the plague, all are equally subject to it. In short, as Camus says, "the entire town found itself under a death sentence." In the midst of this seemingly bleak picture there are those who continue to work against the seemingly inevitable death of their townspeople and themselves. They attempt to heal an apparently incurable condition. They do good and seek to preserve life in the face of ineluctable death. They create meaning in the face of nihilism.

Two such persons are Tarrou and Dr. Rieux, two rather different persons who join forces to fight the plague. During a brief respite, Tarrou tells Rieux why he continues to fight what is obviously a losing battle: "What's natural is the microbe . . . all the rest: health, integrity, purity is a product of the human will, of vigilance which must never falter." Tarrou tells Rieux that he has had the plague all of his life. Try as hard as he could, sooner or later he found himself in the role of executioner. Fighting against the bourgeois "Red Robes" of Europe, he found that his causes led him to inflict as much death and disease as those he sought to replace. Even fighting in the name of Good and Truth, he always ended up a killer. (One thinks of the infamous quote from the Vietnam war: "We had to destroy the village to save it . . ."). So Tarrou sets for himself a goal: as much as possible not to be involved with the death of anyone, not to spread his "plague" to others and — if the chance is offered — to perhaps engage in a bit of healing now and then. Not that the healing can ever be final or permanent, it is just that perhaps — in the end — if one cannot ultimately cure, one can at least avoid causing injury or spreading terror. One may not be able to do good, but maybe one can avoid doing evil.

Rieux, on the other hand, seems at least a bit more sanguine about the potential — of individuals if not institutions — to at least forestall the inevitability of death and nothingness. For in a way which is not — at least to this reader — made very clear in the book, he entertains the notion of "hope". Not an ultimate hope in salvation perhaps, but the hope that through the cultivation of human decency one can find (or create?) meaning and value in the face of the relentless progression of the plague. For Rieux, there is nothing particularly noble in trying to do this. He tells Tarrou: "Fighting the plague is not a question of heroism. It's a matter of common decency. That's an idea which may make some people smile, but the only means of fighting the plague is common decency . . . I know that in my case that simply consists of doing my job." He does what he does because it simply is the right thing to do, not because he is a hero, not because he aspires to sainthood. When one knows that he is subject to the plague he can either deny this (Camus would see this as the religious option), or yield to it passively, or choose to fight it knowing the fight is already lost. It is, curiously, through engaging in this hopeless fight that hope is born and maintained.

At the close of the story, the disease abates and then ceases to be recognizable at all and the townspeople return to their former mode of living. Earlier in the story, one of the characters says: "There's nothing like a good spell of the plague to bring people together . . ." And that was so. While the plague was obviously at its height, distinctions and ranks were forgotten and most who were able joined in the fight. Yet when the disease subsided, the disease-bred unity fell apart and people quickly returned to their illusions and delusions.

Camus closes the story with the following paragraph:

> *"And, indeed, as Rieux listened to the cries of joy rising from the town, he remembered that such joy is always imperiled. He knew what those jubilant crowds did not*

know but could have learned from books: that the plague bacillus never dies or disappears for good; that it can lie dormant for years and years in furniture and linen chests; that it bides its time in bedrooms, cellars, trunks and bookshelves: and that perhaps the day would come when, for the bane and enlightenment of men, it would rouse up its rats and again send them forth to die in a happy city."

As a Christian, I can and do find fault with certain of Camus' ideas and perhaps even with his existentialist ontology which posits the absoluteness of Nothingness and which asks how anyone can believe in the presence of a loving and all-powerful God in the face of the Holocaust. I would also question his apparent belief in the view that the human spirit possesses the *inherent* ability to produce "health, integrity and purity." Were not the institutions of war he so despised the product of human will, albeit writ large? Still, in spite of all this, I remain plagued, for there is a nobility of massive proportions present in Dr. Rieux, Tarrou and the other characters in this allegory. Quite simply, they seem to be doing what they do — practicing decency — without any hope of getting anything in return (in Tarrou's case) and with the hope that things will get a bit better for awhile (in Dr. Rieux's case). As a Christian — when at my best — I do what I do out of the ultimate hope in salvation. Somehow, however, I remain plagued, for is it not — in the ultimate scope of things — more noble, more saintly to do the good which should be done simply because it should be done, simply because it is the decent thing to do? I wonder, were I to lose my faith in the ultimate meaning and purpose of history writ large and my own personal history if I would have the courage to stand in the face of nihilism and fight a battle which cannot be won. I don't know . . . it plagues me still.

— Thomas S. Baker

DISENCHANTED psycholgy student and onetime Ph.D. candidate, Robert M. May has written a book that tells of his personal quest to become whole and of the aid and healing he got during his quest among the world's great religions. *Physicians of the Soul* (Crossroads Publishing, New York, N.Y., $17.50) is written on two levels. It is autobiographical and it is an account of six major religions and how they relate to the search for self or soul. It is worth reading for its insightful interpretation of the spiritual traditions of Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism, Taoism, and Mohammedanism. These the author opposes to modern "scientific psychology."

Scientific psychology, May maintains, reduces man to a thing, which, in the case of the behaviorists, completely denies his inner dimension. Freudian psychology, which he also regards as inadequate, represents the human psyche as "ego" produced by the instincts coming to terms with culture. Jung goes a step farther and introduces the "collective unconscious," with the archetypal imagery and the self creating the possibility of integration or wholeness. Those who came after Jung, however, erected on his work an elaborate paganism in which each archetype has a life of its own. A healing art becomes idolatry again.

Idolatry — the worshipping of idols other than God, Tao, Self, Truth, Allah — is the source of sickness. Idols can be internal (the ego or many egos we think we are) or external (wealth, power, prestige). The modern world abounds in egos. In the author's view, it is torn apart by those who build their lives on false quests. The great religions require that we disentangle ourselves from the internal idols as well as the external ones and become our true selves.

We become what we are meant to be by practicing what the great spiritual teachers taught. On his own quest, Robert May, who considers himself a Jewish Christian, goes beyond his own Judaic-Christian traditions. His journey, to date, has taken ten years. During this time he meditated with practitioners of Zen, studied the Upanishads, sought the advice of rabbis, fasted with Sufis, and became a Christian. Robert May at his best is interpretative, at his worst autobiographical. His autobiographical accounts, full of New Age lingo, sometimes make his serious quest sound like shopping in a supermarket.

Some of the best sections of *Physicians of the Soul* highlight the distinction between "ego" and "true self." May finds the distinction in the teachings of all the great spiritual teachers. "Ego is the self that feels itself to be separate, that identifies itself with the mortal body and hence lives in fear of death, that experiences hatred and envy, and which yearns after temporary pleasures and vanities. True self, in the sense in which I have used it, is your identity in God or the Tao." And, of course, "true self" requires surrender of the "ego" to God or the Tao. "The spiritual Self is that which is within us which unites us with our fellow human beings. It is strange that what is most unique to each person is also what is most universal . . . The sacred dimension is between as well as within." *— Bob Waite*

CREDITS

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Religion and Politics

Who's In, Who's Out

A gathering of social action directors from Catholic dioceses and agencies across the country, sponsored by the bishops, illustrated a fairly recent turnaround in popular opinion within the Catholic church. Peter Steinfels, executive editor of the lay Catholic magazine, *Commonweal*, represented at the meeting a social and political outlook that has only recently, with the church's growing emphasis on peace and social justice issues, been in tune with the mainstream of the church. Opinions expressed in *Commonweal* editorials are in accord with the bishops' statements on war and peace to be published in their pastoral letter this spring. The forum of social action directors showed a conservative lay movement developing in response to the new reality. Philip Lawler, of the Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank, was there to represent that voice — the conservative, anti-communist view that had traditionally dominated. He is helping organize a lay Catholic organization that opposes the bishops' statements and opinions on peace and justice. The new organization will be called the American Catholic Conference, and Mr. Lawler will head it.

Among Protestant denominations, the conflict between conservative and liberal factions rages on in the media. Much editorial space in magazines and newspapers, not to mention a rare double segment of TV's *60 Minutes* has been devoted these last few months to the National Council of Churches, the World Council of Churches, and their detractors. This new wave of criticism by conservative elements against the liberal, social-action-minded ecumenical NCC was set off by an article in last January's *Reader's Digest.* The leading force behind most of the criticism seems to be the Institute for Religion and Democracy, a coalition of clergy, intellectuals and political activists that receives most of its funding from secular, right-wing foundations, though it claims to be politically moderate. The criticism revolves around charges that the WCC and the NCC and some of their mainline Protestant denominations give money to radical left-wing causes in the U.S. and abroad. The NCC, long used to dealing with criticism, responded to the charges in detail. General Secretary Claire Randall stated her opinion that the IRD "set out deliberately to do us in." It doesn't look like that is about to happen, though — in the words of IRD board member Richard Lovelace, "Every evangelical with whom I have been in touch says that the credibility of the WCC has gone up with them, the credibility of *60 Minutes* has gone down, and the credibility of IRD is down the drain."

The Pope "shares the pain" in Central America

On his visit to Central America in March, according to a news analysis in the

New York Times (March 10, 1983), "Pope John Paul II has set new standards for the Roman Catholic Church in Central America in maintaining the separation between the pursuit of social justice and the promotion of political causes . . . But while the overall message urged evenhanded activism in the pursuit of basic social and religious values — peace, social justice, human rights, respect for the religious hierarchy — each thread of it was delivered where it would, by implication, have the clearest political effect."

Central America is a maelstrom of political, religious, and social conflict, and the Pope brought the power and authority of his position to bear on the situation. Reports of the trip varied: some reported on the effect the pope's presence there had on the people's faith; others saw the machinations of political leaders using the event to highlight their causes; others wondered how much the tour did to reduce unrest in the region. The *Times* article sums up: "Aside from giving the people of this embroiled region some sorely needed spiritual encouragement, however, most of the results of the Pope's journey to 'share the pain' are not likely to be seen for some time."

Churches Called on to Provide What the Government Can't — or Won't

Churches have been active these days in trying to fill the gaps created by government cutbacks in social services. It was expected that as the government cut back its funding the private sector would take over these responsibilities. This winter, however, proved that church and other private-sector response to the challenge of feeding the hungry and sheltering the homeless is unable to keep up with increasing need.

A growing number of religious institutions, Christian and Jewish, have provided overnight shelter in their buildings for as many of the burgeoning numbers of people without homes as they can. Many of these people were doing quite well until recently, when rising unemployment and budget cutbacks forced them literally out on the street.

Food banks and hunger programs are also seeing a dramatic increase in demand for their services. One recent development is that entire families and young people are now needing these services more and more. The leading ecumenical Christian lobby group for world hunger, Bread for the World, has shifted its focus and announced it will make lobbying for domestic food and nutrition programs its top priority for 1983.

Another way in which churches and synagogues are responding to those who need help is in the new sanctuary movement, sometimes known as the underground railroad. This campaign was started by a few Midwest churches that decided to publicly declare themselves places of refuge for refugees from El Salvador. Our government has termed Salvadorans economic, rather than political, refugees — a distinction that defies a United Nations designation, and possibly international law. The Immigration and Naturalization Service has orders to deport illegal refugees back to war-torn El Salvador, where they face probable persecution or possible death. The sanctuary movement has grown to include churches in an estimated nine major cities as of this writing, and is being coordinated by the Chicago Religious Task Force on Central America. They see the movement as a way of influencing U.S. foreign policy

toward El Salvador and perhaps changing the laws invoked here against the refugees.

Both the sheltering and the sanctuary movements have created some degree of controversy. Many residents of fashionable neighborhoods fear having what they call "undesirables" around. And protecting refugees considered illegal puts those involved in the underground railroad in direct conflict with the government, just as those they are protecting are in conflict with their own.

World Day of Prayer

Representataives of Fellowship in Prayer, Inc. attended World Day of Prayer celebrations in New Jersey and Maryland last spring. Sponsored in the U.S. by Church Women United, the annual observance united women of faith in 170 countries, and had its beginnings in the U.S. in 1887. The service for 1983 was written by Christian women from the island countries of the Carribbean on the theme, "New persons in Christ." These women, representing a rich mixture of races and cultures, identify with people throughout the world who are striving for political maturity, economic development, and new and better patterns of family life. They called their sisters throughout the world to pray for the churches' strength to help them become even more independent and creative, fashioned to fulfill their human potential as new persons in Christ.

Spiritual Life of Animals

The Seekers Trust, a British center for prayer and spiritual healing, has announced the publication of an unusual book. The staff of *Fellowship in Prayer* has linked up with the Seekers in prayer weekly for many years. Their new book is called *A Pilgrimage with the Animals*, and it "studies in detail the esoteric element of animals, their etheric constitution and their contribution to the spiritual and occult environment in which we all live; their part in God's universal order or nature and their life after death." To order the book, contact: The Seekers Trust, The Close, Addington Park, Nr. Maidstone, Kent, England ME 19 5BL.

Uniting Against Nuclear Threat

During the last year more and more religious bodies have put themselves on record responding to the escalating arms race and the burgeoning threat it's producing. Now, efforts to develop an ecumenical pronouncement are underway. According to the *National Catholic Reporter* (March 18, 1983), Bishop David Preus of the American Lutheran Church has asked Archbishop John Roach, president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops to join him in arranging a meeting of religious leaders to prepare a statement on the nuclear arms race. The NCCB's controversial pastoral letter on war and peace is expected to be finalized this spring.

Hands in Peace

The Academy for Peace Research will be coordinating a coast-to-coast linking of hands on June 12 at noon to make a statement for peace through a demonstration of connection. For more information: Academy of Peace Research, Center Hill Rd., Plymouth, MA 02360. — *D. Jani Druck*

Five Days with Jean Houston

I first heard Jean Houston at the annual conference of the Association for Humanistic Psychology in 1982. She was wearing a long black gown which had the effect of drawing the eye from her towering six-foot frame. With her prepared notes and her frequent allusions to antiquity, the author of *Mind Games* initially struck me as a typical academic intellectual. First impressions changed as she warmed to her speech. Her oratorical gifts, had she been born black, short, and rotund, would have made her a match for Father Divine. Her topic was "the age of transformation," her premise that we are living not quite at the end of an age nor at the beginning of a new one, but in "a time of parenthesis." She lit into the topic like a Holy Roller. "We find ourselves in a time in which extremely limited consciousness has powers once accorded to gods," she said. "Never before has the responsibility of the human race for the planetary process been greater."

As I left after her speech, I picked up a brochure that advertised a Houston Workshop called "Masters of the High Game: A New Course in Evoking and Sustaining the Possible Human." I marked my calendar and decided to go. What follows are selected excerpts of impressions received during five days with Houston at Stony Point, New York.

I had first heard the term "possible human" from Paul Solomon. He divides humanity into three camps: the average, the possible, and the metahuman. The average human, according to this scheme, spends most of his or her time preoccupied with money. The possible human lives on higher chakras than the average and is responsible for most scientific or artistic achievement. The metahuman's energy is concentrated on the two uppermost chakras. "Every human," Solomon says, "is capable of becoming the metahuman. Whether we do so or not depends on our motivation, dedication, and awareness of the subtle energies of life." It is apparent that by the term "possible human" Houston means something more akin to "fuller actualization of the self."

On the first day of the advanced portion of the eight-day program (I skipped the first three preliminary days), Houston explained that it would follow "the transformative journey of the Magister Ludi, the Master of the High

Game." *Magister Ludi,* of course, is the book by Herman Hesse sometimes called "The Glass Bead Game."

Houston has further divided the workshop's five days according to Gerald Heard's psycho-historical theory of man's evolution — from the pre-individual, pre-infant stage which Heard says corresponds with tribal man, through the post-individual phase that corresponds with ecological man, or the second maturity. Each day will be personified by a myth representing the theme of the day — by the myth of Odysseus, the heroic adventurer, for example, on the second day. Odysseus represents the phase of infancy, or childhood.

On the first day I have my first taste of Houston's celebrated "psychophysical" exercises. One is a moving exercise which Houston seems to have adapted from Gurdjieff. We are asked to tune into the name of an archetypal or "totem" self, then walk as if we were walking that self's walk. We then do the same for a sensory self, an intellectual self, an emotional self, and so on. Periodically Houston exhorts us to "stop" and freeze into the position in which we find ourselves. At that point, a la Gurdjieff's command to his dancers, we are to mentally examine our postures and reflect on our minds' contents. Later, we are asked to reflect on which of the "selves" we found most likable. I call my archetypal self "the wanderer," my sensory self "the lover," my intellectual self "the sage," and my emotional self "the tango dancer." I find my intellectual self the most tedious, my emotional self the most ridiculous.

According to Heard, one of the main characteristics of pre-individual man about 35,000 B.C. was a sense of "co-consciousness," or what anthropologist Levi-Strauss referred to as "the participation mystique" in which the mind of the individual and the mind of the tribe are indivisible. The next stage is marked, historically, by man's beginning to see himself as apart from nature. The separation from nature starts with birth, as certain scientific evidence shows. Dr Isaac Schour of the University of Illinois College of Dentistry reported the discovery of growth rings on human teeth that apparently mark the incidence of illness and glandular disorders. Critical to this discovery was a ring called "the neo-natal ring," which marked the pain of birth.

To help us "cure our births," Houston has designed a process patterned after the seminal "birth without violence" work of Frederick Leboyer. Leboyer postulated that birth should be a non-violent affair involving delayed umbilicus separation, soft lights, gentle handling and mild massage by the mother immediately following birth. The children Leboyer delivered according to this process appeared extremely well-adjusted, highly intelligent and, for some reason, tended to be ambidextrous.

So we gather in small groups and bunch ourselves together in a reproduction of the birth canal. One by one we push each other through the canal and greet the newly born ones with tenderness. At the close, a musician tells of his impulse to reach back and return to the womb, an impulse he connects with being breach-born. Houston tells him to go to the piano. "You have two minutes to play yourself out of the womb," she says, stone-faced. "This is serious stuff."

The second night is patterned after some Greek ritual. It will conclude with all of us donning white and sleeping and dreaming together on the floor of the main hall. We are to attempt to dream true, significant dreams. When morning comes, some remember their dreams. One is a young man I'll call John who has had a dream in three parts. In the first part he was with an Italian family watching a TV channel he wanted them to change. In the second he opened a closet to discover a female friend trapped in a Murphy bed. He liberates her, only to find she is angry at him for taking so long. In the third he was in the presence of blacks and Hispanics with whom he could not communicate.

Houston seizes on the fact that minority people were present in all aspects of John's dream. "Will all of the non-Caucasian people come to the front of the room?" she asks. I and four others wake from reveries. Houston asks John if he has anything to say to any of us. He turns to a black woman and tells her he wants to hug her. She acquiesces, and eventually they stand up and dance. "It's all too nice," says someone over my shoulder, one of Houston's cohorts. "The wild man inside him is still chained down."

Now, I had been reading about "the wild man" in an interview with Robert Bly in *New Age*. Bly said many men of the younger generation were burdened because they had no positive masculine role-models to emulate. Because of the pressures of feminism, many of them attempted to live as gentle, non-aggressive beings, but remained unhappy, somehow unrealized. It was Bly's feeling that all men need to get in touch with that dark, fierce "wild man" part of their natures.

Suddenly I find myself in the center of the room, saying to John, "All of this is very nice. But how does it relate to the wild man inside you that wants to become free?"

John decides to act out his "wild man" by parading around the circle in a screaming rage. Houston orders him to ask me if I am convinced. I wasn't. I did have a suggestion, however. "I don't know how socially acceptable this may seem," I said, "but let's wrestle." We did.

The fourth day. A few provocative exercises. In one we create an astral "double" in the style of Castaneda's Don Juan. We are first to visualize another mirror-image gazing back at us, then imagine the other is breathing up his spine, then transferring this sensation back and forth between the two, then allowing the other to assume the consciousness of a "spirit animal." In another exercise, I choose the most beautiful woman present to play a New-Age version of de Sade that Houston has conjured up. We are to write down five or more of the things we are frequently accused of.

Robin Beebe, Houston's colleague, encourages us on the last day to "dance our dreams." We are to find some music and secretly dance around the house, reciting or singing affirmations of fulfillment. I've already got mine visualized. The room slowly empties as goodbyes are said and we spill out into our separate worlds. — *Angelo John Lewis*

The opinions expressed in this issue are the authors' and/or subjects' and not necessarily those of the editors or of Fellowship in Prayer.

SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI (1182-1226)

A Franciscan Triad

Francis and Peace

Like a babe at peace
On its mother's breast,
Nestles Assisi in Umbria.
Over its quiet hills,
Il Poverello walks again,
Oblivious to the din
Of armaments and war,
Seeking once more
The brotherhood of man and peace.

Sing, Brother Birds,
Sing, Sister Flowers,
Sing loud that the world may hear.

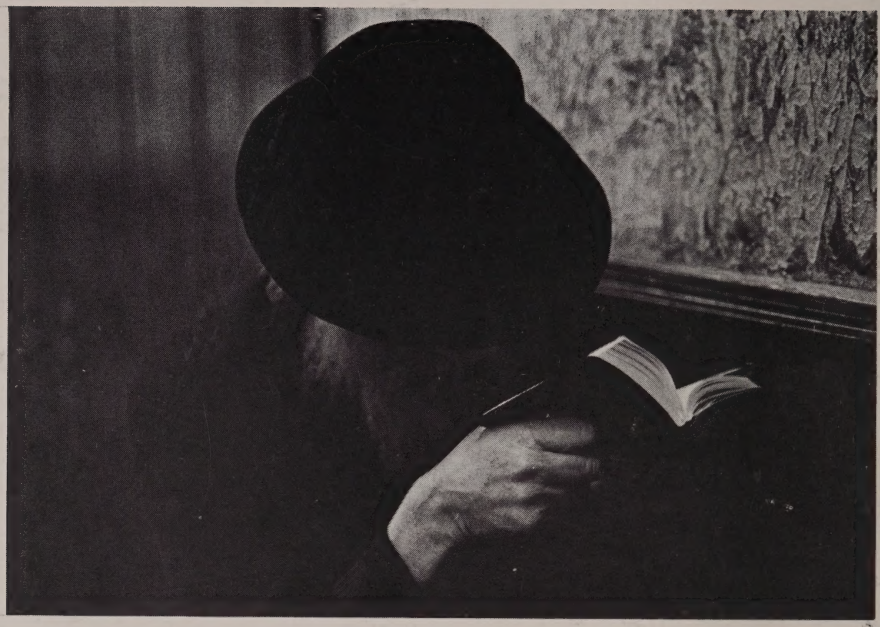
Francis and the Wolf

Tigers and lambs we oft can see
Immortalized in poetry.
Of wolves, the one of Gubbio
Lives in immortal song to those who know
Il Poverello and the Umbrian hills.

Francis and Brother Fire

Sear not, Brother Fire;
Gentle be!
I have always, Brother Fire,
Cherished thee.
I have always sung thy goodness,
Always praised thy worth.
Lift me, Brother Fire,
Far above this earth.

— Sister M. Florence Tumasz, C.S.F.N.



FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

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